

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (original) A printed circuit board comprising a substrate, a plurality of electronic components, and a pattern of metal tracks (1) on said substrate for connecting said electronic components, said metal tracks (1) being covered with a protective non-conductive layer, wherein said board further comprises a fuse, said fuse comprising a narrowed metal track (3) within the pattern, characterized in that said narrowed metal track (3) is uncovered such that it is exposed to air.

2. (original) The printed circuit board according to claim 1, wherein further an area (4) of at least 0.5 mm, preferably at least 1 mm extending from said narrowed metal track (1) is uncovered.

3. (currently amended) The printed circuit board according to claim 1~~or 2~~, wherein further a distance of at least 1.5 mm, preferably at least 2 mm of the ends (6) of the wider metal tracks (1) extending from both ends of the narrowed metal track (3) are uncovered.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

4. (currently amended) The printed circuit board according to claim 1, ~~2 or 3~~, wherein the width of said narrowed metal track (3) is less than 0.3 mm, preferably less than 0.2 mm.

5. (currently amended) The printed circuit board according to ~~any of the previous claims 1 -- 4~~ claim 1, wherein a slot (5) is provided in the substrate alongside substantially the entire length of the narrowed metal track (3) at both sides thereof.

6. (original) The printed circuit board according to claim 5, wherein said slots (5) are located at a distance of less than 2 mm, preferably less than 1.5 mm from the narrowed metal track (3).

7. (currently amended) The printed circuit board according to claim 5 ~~or 6~~, wherein the area (4) between the narrowed metal track (3) and the slots (5) is substantially uncovered.

8. (currently amended) The printed circuit board according to claim 5, ~~6 or 7~~, wherein the width of the slots (5) is at least 0.5 mm, preferably at least 1 mm.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

9. (currently amended) An electronic ballast for a gas discharge lamp comprising a printed circuit board according to ~~any of the preceding claims 1 -- 8~~claim 1.

10. (original) A method for producing a printed circuit board comprising a substrate, a plurality of electronic components, and a pattern of metal tracks (1) on said substrate for connecting said electronic components, said metal tracks (1) being covered with a protective non-conductive layer, wherein said board is further provided with a fuse by providing a narrowed metal track (3) within the pattern, characterized in that said narrowed metal track (3) is not covered with a protective non-conductive layer such that it remains exposed to air.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY